

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of: Ishwara A. Bhat

Appl. No.: 10/708,899

Filed: March 30, 2004

For: Evacuation Systems Providing
Enhanced Operational Control

Art Unit: 2612

Examiner: Goins, Davetta Woods

Atty. Docket: H0005369

Amendment and Response Under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.111

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Non-final Office Action mailed 07/25/2006, Applicants submit the following remarks.

Amendments to the claims are reflected in the listing of claims which begin on page 2 of this paper.

Remarks begin on page 7 of this paper.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those which may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and any fees required therefor (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No.: 20-0674.

Listing of Claims

1 Claim 1(Previously Presented): An evacuation system comprising:
2 a plurality of detectors, each of said plurality of detectors being designed to detect an
3 undesirable situation at a corresponding location and to generate an alarm in response to
4 detecting said undesirable situation;
5 a plurality of voice point modules, wherein each of said plurality of voice point
6 modules is addressable by a corresponding address and is capable of playing voice messages;
7 and
8 a station being designed to receive said alarm, and to cause a potentially different
9 message to be played on one or more of said plurality of voice point modules, whereby an
10 operator using said station has enhanced control over evacuation.

1 Claim 2 (Previously Presented): An evacuation system comprising:
2 a plurality of detectors, each of said plurality of detectors being designed to detect an
3 undesirable situation at a corresponding location and to generate an alarm in response to
4 detecting said undesirable situation;
5 a plurality of voice point modules, wherein each of said plurality of voice point
6 modules is individually addressable and is capable of playing voice messages;
7 a station being designed to receive said alarm, and to cause a potentially different
8 message to be played on each of said plurality of voice point modules, whereby an operator
9 using said station has enhanced control over evacuation;
10 a fire alarm control panel (FACP) being positioned between said station and said
11 plurality of detectors, said FACP receiving said alarm from each of said plurality of detectors,
12 and forwarding said alarms to said station,
13 wherein said station sends packets directly to said plurality of voice point modules
14 without said FACP being in the path from said station to said plurality of detectors.

1 Claim 3 (Original): The evacuation system of claim 2, wherein said station
2 communicates with said plurality of voice point modules over a network, wherein each of
3 said plurality of voice modules is individually addressable by an addressing approach
4 specified by said network.

1 Claim 4 (Original): The evacuation system of claim 3, wherein said network is
2 implemented using Internet Protocol (IP), wherein each of said plurality of voice point
3 modules is addressed by at least one IP address.

1 Claim 5 (Original): The evacuation system of claim 3, wherein said station enables
2 said operator to speak and provide corresponding voice as a live message, wherein said
3 station converts said live message as a voice data and forwards said voice data to one or more
4 of said plurality of voice point modules as said live message.

1 Claim 6 (Original): The evacuation system of claim 5, wherein said station sends a
2 control data to each of said plurality of voice point modules on a control connection.

1 Claim 7 (Original): The evacuation system of claim 6, wherein said control data
2 indicates that said voice data is to be played as said live message.

1 Claim 8 (Original): The evacuation system of claim 7, wherein said control data and
2 said live message are sent according to H.323 protocol.

1 Claim 9 (Original): The evacuation system of claim 7, wherein said station sends a
2 second voice data to a second voice point module comprised in said plurality of voice point
3 modules, wherein said control data requests to store said voice data in said second voice point
4 module, said second voice point module comprising:
5 a memory storing a plurality of messages; and
6 a control block causing said voice data to be stored in said memory in response to said
7 request.

1 Claim 10 (Original): The evacuation system of claim 9, wherein said station sends a
2 third control data requesting said second voice point module to play one of said plurality of
3 messages, said second voice point module further comprising:
4 a voice module receiving said one of said plurality of messages from said memory and

5 playing said one of said plurality of messages on a speaker.

1 Claim 11 (Original): The evacuation system of claim 10, wherein said station sends
2 a fourth control data requesting a volume of said speaker to be changed, wherein said volume
3 of said speaker is changed in response to said fourth control data being received in said
4 second voice point module.

1 Claim 12 (Original): The evacuation system of claim 9, wherein said station sends
2 a fifth control data requesting a telephone call be setup at said second voice point module,
3 wherein said control block sets up said telephone call using a phone in response to receiving
4 said fifth control data.

1 Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A voice point module comprising:
2 a network interface having an address such that said voice point module is addressable
3 by said address;
4 an audio block receiving a voice data; and
5 a control block receiving a control data and causing said voice data to be processed
6 according to said control data,
7 wherein said network interface receives said voice data and said control data in one
8 or more packets, and forwards said voice data to said audio block and said control data to said
9 control block if said one or more packets have a destination address equaling said address.

1 Claim 14 (Original): The voice point module of claim 13, wherein said control data
2 specifies that said voice data is to be played as a live message, wherein said control block
3 causes said audio block to play said voice data as said live message on a speaker in response
4 to receiving said control data.

1 Claim 15 (Original): The voice point module of claim 13, further comprising a
2 memory, wherein said control data specifies that said voice data is to be stored in said
3 memory as a message, wherein said control block causes said voice data to be stored in said
4 memory in response to receiving said control data.

1 Claim 16 (Original): The voice point module of claim 15, wherein said control block
2 receives another control data, wherein said another control data requests that said message
3 stored in said memory be played immediately, wherein said control block causes said audio
4 block to play said message on a speaker in response to receiving said another control data.

1 Claim 17 (Original): The voice point module of claim 13, wherein said control data
2 specifies a volume level of a speaker is to be changed, wherein said control block causes said
3 audio block to change said volume level of said speaker in response to receiving said control
4 data.

1 Claim 18 (Original): The voice point module of claim 13, wherein said control data
2 specifies that a telephone call be setup with a phone provided with said voice point module,
3 wherein said control block causes said telephone call to be setup in response to receiving said
4 control data.

1 Claim 19 (Currently Amended): A computer readable medium carrying one or more
2 sequences of instructions for causing a station to provide increased operational control over
3 evacuation procedures when an undesirable situation is detected, said station being connected
4 to a network, wherein execution of said one or more sequences of instructions by one or more
5 processors causes said one or more processors to perform the actions of:

6 receiving on said network a packet containing an alarm, said alarm indicating the
7 detection of said undesirable situation; and

8 sending a voice data and a control data in the form of a plurality of packets in response
9 to said receiving, wherein each of said plurality of packets contains an address of a voice
10 point module, wherein said voice point module is accessible by said address, wherein said
11 voice point module processes said voice data according to said control data.

1 Claim 20 (Original): The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein said
2 control data specifies that said voice data is to be played as a live message, wherein said
3 voice point module plays said voice data as said live message on a speaker in response to

4 receiving said control data.

1 Claim 21 (Original): The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein said control
2 data specifies that said voice data is to be stored in said voice point module as a message,
3 wherein said voice point module stores said voice data in a memory in response to receiving
4 said control data.

1 Claim 22 (Original): The computer readable medium of claim 21, further comprising
2 sending another control data to said voice point module, wherein said another control data
3 requests that said message stored in said memory be played immediately, wherein said voice
4 point module plays said message on a speaker in response to receiving said another control
5 data.

1 Claim 23 (Original): The computer readable medium of claim 19, wherein said control
2 data specifies a volume level of a speaker is to be changed, wherein said voice point module
3 causes said volume level of said speaker to be changed in response to receiving said control
4 data.

1 Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The evacuation system of claim 1, wherein said
2 station communicates with said one or more of said plurality of voice modules using said
3 corresponding address of each of said one or more of said plurality of voice modules , and
4 said playing of voice messages occurring in response to receiving said communication
5 from said station, wherein said communication specifies which one of said voice messages
6 is to be played.

1 Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The evacuation system of claim 1, wherein each of
2 said voice point modules sends said corresponding address to said station at a time of
3 initialization, and said station displays a map of all voice point modules from which the
4 corresponding address is received.

Claim 26 (Canceled)

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 were examined in the outstanding office action mailed on 03/27/2006 (hereafter "Outstanding Office Action"). Applicants note with appreciation that claims 1-12 (and though not so stated in the Outstanding Office Action, also claims 24 and 25, by virtue of dependence from allowed claim 1) were allowed and claims 18 and 26 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent format including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 13-17 and 19-25 were rejected.

By virtue of this response, independent claims 13 and 19 are sought to be amended, and claim 26 is sought to be canceled. The amendments and cancellation are believed not to introduce new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested. Claims 1-25 are thus presented for reconsideration, further in view of the below remarks.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 13-17 and 19-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Capowski *et al* (US Pat. 6,693,532) in view of Kirschner *et al* (US Pat. 6,856,258 B2). The rejections are rendered moot at least in view of the above amendments, as explained below.

Independent claim 13 is sought to be amended to include at least several features of claim 26, indicated to be allowable but now canceled. Accordingly, amended claim 13 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 14-18 are allowable at least as depending from allowable base claim 13.

Amended independent claims 19 is also allowable over the art of record at least as reciting in relevant parts:

A computer readable medium carrying one or more sequences of instructions for causing a station to provide increased operational control over evacuation procedures when an undesirable situation is detected, said station being connected to a network, wherein execution of said one or more sequences of instructions by one or more processors causes said one or more processors to perform the actions of:

receiving on said network a packet containing an alarm, said ***alarm indicating***

the detection of said undesirable situation; and
sending a voice data and a control data in the form of a plurality of packets
in response to said receiving, wherein each of said plurality of packets contains an
address of a voice point module, wherein said voice point module is accessible by said
address, wherein said voice point module processes said voice data according to said
control data.
(Currently amended independent claim 19, ***Emphasis Added***)

Neither Capowski nor Kirschner discloses or reasonably suggests (in combination or
individually) the feature of sending voice data to voice point modules in response to receiving
alarms on a network, as claimed.

Currently amended independent claim 19 is accordingly allowable over the art of
record. Dependent claims 20-23 are allowable at least as depending from the allowable base
claim 19.

Claim 23 is independently allowable at least as reciting, "... wherein said control data
specifies a volume level of a speaker is to be changed, wherein said voice point module
causes said volume level of said speaker to be changed in response to receiving said control
data." The art of record does not appear to disclose such control of volume level (at the voice
point module) from a station.

Conclusion

Thus, all the objections and rejections are believed to be overcome and the application
is believed to be in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to telephone the
undersigned representative at 707.356.4172 if it is believed that an interview might be useful
for any reason.

Respectfully submitted,

/Narendra Reddy Thappeta/

Signature

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